

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1232

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to construct a full service hospital in Far South Texas.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 26, 2009

Mr. ORTIZ (for himself, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. DOGGETT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to construct a full service hospital in Far South Texas.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Far South Texas Vet-
5 erans Medical Center Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; DEFINITION.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
8 ings:

9 (1) The current and future health care needs of
10 veterans residing in the Far South Texas area are

1 not being fully met by the Department of Veterans
2 Affairs.

3 (2) The Department of Veterans Affairs esti-
4 mates that more than 117,000 veterans reside in
5 Far South Texas.

6 (3) In its Capital Asset Realignment for En-
7 hanced Services study, the Department of Veterans
8 Affairs found that fewer than three percent of its
9 enrollees in the Valley-Coastal Bend Market of Vet-
10 erans Integrated Service Network 17 reside within
11 its acute hospital access standards.

12 (4) Travel times for veterans from the market
13 referred to in paragraph (3) can exceed six hours
14 from their residences to the nearest Department of
15 Veterans Affairs hospital for acute inpatient health
16 care.

17 (5) Even with the significant travel times, vet-
18 erans from Far South Texas demonstrate a high de-
19 mand for health care services from the Department
20 of Veterans Affairs.

21 (6) Current deployments involving members of
22 the Texas National Guard and Reservists from
23 Texas will continue to increase demand for medical
24 services provided by the Department of Veterans Af-
25 fairs.

1 (b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this Act, the term
2 “Far South Texas” means the following counties of the
3 State of Texas: Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Calhoun, Cameron,
4 Crockett, DeWitt, Dimmit, Duval, Goliad, Hidalgo, Jack-
5 son, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Nueces,
6 Refugio, San Patricio, Starr, Victoria, Webb, Willacy, and
7 Zapata.

8 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF CONSTRUCTION OF MAJOR**
9 **MEDICAL FACILITY IN FAR SOUTH TEXAS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
11 is authorized to carry out the construction of a major med-
12 ical facility project in Far South Texas. The project shall
13 consist of a full service Department of Veterans Affairs
14 hospital, in an amount not to exceed \$175,000,000.

15 (b) FACILITY LOCATION.—The facility referred to in
16 subsection (a) shall be located in a county in Far South
17 Texas that the Secretary determines to be most appro-
18 priate to meeting the health care needs of veterans in Far
19 South Texas.

20 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
21 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans
22 Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Af-
23 fairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report
24 identifying and outlining the determination of the Sec-
25 retary under subsection (b) and a detailed estimate of the

- 1 cost of and time necessary for completion of the project
- 2 authorized under subsection (a).

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